



Regulatory Welsh-Medium and Bilingual Qualifications Policy

NOVEMBER 2017



Version control and review

This is version 2 of Qualifications Wales' Regulatory Welsh-Medium and Bilingual Qualifications policy. Version 1 was approved on 13 May 2016 by the Qualifications Wales Board. It is designed for awarding bodies.

This policy explains our overall approach to the provision of Welsh-medium and bilingual qualifications by recognised awarding bodies. It does not set out Qualifications Wales' corporate approach to Welsh; this will be covered in a separate policy and action plan which is currently being developed.

Qualifications Wales will keep this policy statement under review, and if it considers it appropriate as a consequence of a review, prepare revised statements and updates. Qualifications Wales will review this document once a year. Such a review may consider the effectiveness of the policy and its ongoing applicability. The next review of this statement is due to take place no later than November 2017.

The accompanying action plan will be reported against and updated every six months.

We welcome feedback on this policy at any time. Please send any comments to policy@qualificationswales.org.

General Principles of the Regulatory Welsh-Medium and Bilingual Qualifications Policy

This policy relates to all awarding bodies that have been recognised under Section 4 (*Recognition of awarding bodies*) of the Qualifications Wales Act 2015 (“the Act”).

As stated in the Act, when exercising its functions, Qualifications Wales must act in a way that it considers appropriate for the purpose of achieving the principal aims of (a) ensuring that qualifications, and the Welsh qualification system, are effective for meeting the reasonable needs of learners in Wales; and (b) promoting public confidence in qualifications and in the Welsh qualification system. In considering what is appropriate for the purposes of achieving our principal aims, we will consider (among other things):

“the desirability of promoting and facilitating the use of the Welsh language, including through the availability of assessment arrangements that provide for assessment through the medium of the Welsh language, and of qualifications that otherwise promote or facilitate the use of the Welsh language”

Section 3, Principal aims of the Act

Regulatory Welsh-Medium and Bilingual Qualifications Policy

1. The aim of this policy is that learners in Wales should have access to a range of qualifications that can be assessed through the medium of Welsh and bilingually.
2. Qualifications Wales will normally¹ require **Approved**² qualifications to be available for assessment both through the medium of Welsh and English.
3. Qualifications Wales encourages awarding bodies to make assessment available through the medium of both Welsh and English for as wide a range of **Designated**³ qualifications as possible.
4. Qualifications Wales may be able to provide support to awarding bodies to assist them in meeting the demand for qualifications that are assessed through the medium of Welsh. For example, the provision of financial support to awarding bodies to help meet this demand.
5. In order to determine further ways in which Qualifications Wales can promote and facilitate sufficient provision of Welsh-medium and bilingual qualifications and assessment arrangements, a number of actions are being undertaken in collaboration with awarding bodies and other stakeholders. The current version and update on the previous version can be found at Annex A. These actions will inform the content of this policy as they are progressed.

¹ The exception is where the assessment is testing the learner’s skills in a specific language such as GCSE Welsh language or GCSE English language.

² <http://qualificationswales.org/regulation/approval-of-qualifications/?lang=en>

³ <http://qualificationswales.org/regulation/approval-of-qualifications/?lang=en>

Priorities for November 2016 – May 2017	
a)	Identify and establish a group of awarding bodies that we can consult with as we further develop specific actions in relation to Welsh-medium and bilingual qualifications.
b)	Through this group, consider the viability of creating a system which can match awarding bodies with external verifiers / external quality assurers who are able to verify through the medium of Welsh.

Update on progress

In May 2016 Qualifications Wales published the following actions alongside its Regulatory Welsh-medium and Bilingual Policy.

May 2016 – November 2016	Update
a)	<p>Work with stakeholders to identify what data is available regarding the need for, and availability of, Welsh-medium qualifications, and understand any challenges in collecting this data and how accurate the data is.</p> <p>Qualifications Wales has compiled relevant data from available sources including the census, LLWR and the Welsh Language Survey in order to provide us with a picture of trends in the use of the Welsh language to inform our policy development. We found that data comes from a range of sources and is not always captured in a meaningful way. We have reported this to Welsh Government through its consultation exercise on its draft strategy, “A million Welsh speakers by 2050”.</p>

		We are also considering what data would be useful to collect directly from awarding bodies, taking into account the practicalities of doing so.
b)	Liaise with awarding bodies to review and update the information on QiW (the database of Qualifications in Wales) regarding the 'language of assessment' (that is, whether the qualification may be assessed through the medium of Welsh).	<p>The Priority Cleanse of QiW ended on 30 November 2016 and a final QiW update took place on 1 December 2016. Awarding bodies have reviewed the 'Language' field for all qualifications in QiW and updated any records where necessary. This full data set will enable us to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report accurately on assessment through the medium of Welsh across vocational and general qualifications; • help to identify gaps in the qualifications landscape; • inform the setting of Approval / Designation criteria.
c)	Identify the mechanisms that are available to, and used by, awarding bodies to provide qualifications and assessment in Welsh and seek to further understand the challenges they face and how these could be addressed.	<p>In March 2016 all awarding bodies were invited to contribute to the development of the Regulatory Welsh-medium and bilingual qualifications policy. As part of this exercise a number of challenges that awarding bodies face were identified. These included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • availability of Welsh-medium external verifiers / external quality assurers;

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • timescales for the production of materials; • consistency and accuracy of translations; • cost of translation. <p>Possible solutions to these issues were discussed at the Awarding Body Forum on 13 December. This will inform the priorities for the next 6 months (above).</p>
d)	<p>Take action to ensure that, should any qualifications be developed in response to the sectoral review of Health and Social Care qualifications, they normally offer assessment both through the medium of Welsh and English. This may require, in some cases, initial financial support, potentially through an element of grant funding.</p>	<p>The draft contract specification for the procurement of the new suite of Health and Social care qualifications outlines the requirement that the new qualifications must be made available bilingually. It has been agreed that financial support, through a grant, will be made available for the support of the translation of the qualifications' specifications and sample assessment materials; this is also outlined in the draft contract specification.</p>
e)	<p>Continue to work with stakeholders to develop a joined-up approach to the promotion and facilitation of the use of the Welsh language in qualifications.</p>	<p>Qualifications Wales has had ongoing discussions with relevant stakeholders such as Coleagu Cymru, NTFW and the Welsh Language Commissioner. We are also developing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Commissioner which will set out our commitment to work together wherever possible to</p>

		promote and facilitate the use of the Welsh language. It is hoped that this will be signed-off in Spring 2017.
November 2016		
a)	Review and report on progress against the action plan and the outcomes from the activities, and agree any further updates.	Achieved
b)	Work with Higher Education Institutions to better understand what is currently available in Welsh at their organisations. This will help us to prioritise key progression routes through the medium of Welsh.	Ongoing